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EUGENICS, EUTHENICS, AND EUDEMICS¹

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EUGENICS

ARTIFICIAL SELECTION

When Charles Darwin, in his great work on *Variations of Animals and Plants under Domestication*, published in 1868, taught the whole world the marvelous efficiency of artificial selection, it was no wonder that the idea of applying it to the human race should have occurred to many. His talented cousin, Francis Galton, was the first publicly to suggest such an application. He had used the word "stirp"² for the primary bearers of heredity, and he perceived that in the improvement of cereals and fruit trees, and the breeding of domestic animals, man had been engaged practically in the culture of hereditary stirps.

STIRPICULTURE

In an article on "Hereditary Improvement," published in *Fraser's Magazine* for January, 1873, he had used the word "viriculture" (p. 119) for what he now renamed "stirpiculture," and

¹ A lecture delivered before the Federation for Child Study in New York, on January 30, 1913.

² In a paper entitled, "A Theory of Heredity," read before the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain, November 9, 1875, and published earliest in the *Contemporary Review* for December, 1875, where the word is used and explained on p. 81, and soon after in the *Journal of the Institute*, V, No. 3 (January, 1876), where the same passage occurs on p. 330.

his claim that mankind might be made the beneficiary of this potent principle seemed altogether reasonable. But such a captivating idea could not fail to be seized upon by charlatans and carried to unwarrantable lengths, and very soon the term "stirpiculture" had degenerated and become objectionable to all refined natures. Galton was therefore compelled to abandon it and to adopt another which could not be so easily prostituted to coarse sensual ends, and in 1883 he introduced the word "eugenics"¹ for practically the same idea. This term has been kept fairly within the pale of science, but it has almost set the world on fire, and now seems to engross the attention of all classes. Many see in eugenics the regeneration of mankind. Is there a rational basis for this, or is it only a temporary popular "craze," doomed to collapse after a short period?

NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE EUGENICS

Dr. C. W. Saleeby² has clearly pointed out that eugenics embraces two quite different fields, which he very appropriately calls negative eugenics and positive eugenics, respectively. Negative eugenics relates to the problem of preventing the mental and physical defectives of society from perpetuating their defects through propagation. Positive eugenics relates to the problem of improving the mass of mankind by the selection of the superior in the process of reproduction.

It is clear that these are two entirely distinct problems. As the defectives are the wards of society, society has somewhat the same control over them as intelligent men have over the vegetable and animal kingdoms, and there is no good reason why it should not act in the same way with regard to them, and eliminate as completely and as rapidly as possible the worthless elements in the population. Nothing but an inexcusable indifference, due to

¹ In his book entitled, *Inquiries into Human Faculty and Its Development*, London, 1883, p. 44. He here says: "The investigation of human eugenics—that is, of the conditions under which men of a high type are produced—is at present extremely hampered by the want of full family histories, both medical and general, extending over three or four generations." He does not even italicize the word here, and it is evident that in thus incidentally using it he had no idea of the rôle that it was soon destined to play.

² *Sociological Review* (London), II (July, 1909), 228.

general ignorance and the half-unconscious state of society, prevents this being done. This problem has been adequately treated by the two lecturers who have preceded me on this platform, and I will therefore make no attempt to treat it myself.

POSITIVE EUGENICS

The great problem remains, the problem of positive eugenics. The principle underlying it is beyond question. The power of an intelligent being to modify to almost any extent the qualities of organisms over which such a being has complete control has been demonstrated beyond peradventure. Why, then, may not human nature be thus modified, and the human race be lifted up in the same way and to the same degree that the vegetable and animal races have been lifted up? In 1891 I myself said:¹

Artificial selection has given to man the most that he possesses of value in the organic products of the earth. May not men and women be selected as well as sheep and horses? From the great stirp of humanity with all its multiplied ancestral plasms—some very poor, some mediocre, some merely indifferent, a goodly number ranging from middling to fair, only a comparatively few very good, with an occasional crystal of the first water—from all this, why may we not learn to select on some broad and comprehensive plan with a view to a general building-up and rounding-out of the race of human beings? At least we should by a rigid selection stamp out of the future all the wholly unworthy elements. Public sentiment should be created in this direction, and when the day comes that society shall be as profoundly shocked at the crime of perpetuating the least taint of hereditary disease, insanity, or other serious defect as it now is at the comparatively harmless crime of incest, the way to practical and successful stirpiculture² will have already been found.

¹ "Neo-Darwinism and Neo-Lamarckism," annual address of the president of the Biological Society of Washington, delivered January 24, 1891, *Proceedings*, VI, 71.

² I had not at this date heard the word "eugenics," but the word "stirpiculture" was quite common in America. In fact, even in England, it was supposed to be an American word. Thus, Mr. H. G. Wells, in discussing Galton's paper on "Eugenics," read before the Sociological Society of London on May 16, 1904, said: "'Eugenics,' which is really only a new word for the popular American term 'stirpiculture,' seems to me to be a term that is not without its misleading implications." See the report of that meeting published in the *American Journal of Sociology* for July, 1904, X, 11. To this remark of Mr. Wells, Mr. Galton replied (*ibid.*, pp. 24-25): "Mr. Wells spoke of 'stirpiculture' as a term preferable to 'eugenics.' I myself invented it, and deliberately changed it for 'eugenics.'"

Indeed it seemed at first very simple, but the moment a practical application of it is contemplated an insuperable difficulty arises. The control of heredity is possible only to a master-creature. Man is the master-creature of the animal world. Society is the master of its defectives. But normal people are their own masters. History tells of sumptuary laws by which kings controlled the food and clothing of their subjects. This has all been long since done away. But the most extreme sumptuary law would be liberty itself compared with any attempt on the part of society to control the choice of partners in their marital relations. This would be a tyranny by the side of which all other tyrannies would fade into insignificance.

So clear had this become to Galton himself that he had long confined the practical teaching of positive eugenics to the idea of making the laws of heredity so widely and thoroughly known that people would practice them for themselves, and thus automatically, as it were, perfect the human race. That this is possible no one will question, but there are reasons why its success must remain comparatively small even in the most enlightened communities.

In the first place, eugenists are not usually willing to admit the enormous force of personal preference. When two persons are attracted to each other by those subtle laws of their emotional natures, they are not likely to inquire whether they are fitted to maintain the standard or improve the quality of the race. However deeply grounded in the laws of heredity they may be, their passion completely blinds them to all lack of harmony with such laws. Even if they attend to it, they are sure to believe that no such deficiencies exist. We cannot imagine them abandoning their intentions on that account. The number of cases in which this would occur would be so extremely small as to produce no appreciable effect upon society or the race.

In the second place, Galton was not willing to accept the popular view that Nature herself tends to bring about race improvement through the selection of opposites. He even attempted to prove from a few statistical facts, taken from the highest classes where exceptions would be most likely to occur, that the reverse was the case, and that the sexes preferred similar, and not different, qualities.

The biological imperative.—There are many ways in which Nature strives to maintain a perfect race, and even to improve it. I have grouped all these tendencies together under the phrase “biological imperative,”¹ and it constitutes one of the most salutary principles of sociology. Moreover, it is not recognized or understood by eugenists, which is a serious defect in their doctrine. It is the *vis medicatrix naturae* of society. A large part of the degeneracy of the higher classes is due to the neglect of this principle, and to the attempt, often successful, to defeat its normal operation. There has been too much interference with Nature’s ways. Man assumes to know better than Nature how to guide the forces of heredity. He sets up artificial imperatives—the social imperative, the categorical imperative—and he thereby thwarts Nature in her wholesome tendencies, which all look to the vigor of the race. It is these manifold social and artificial restraints that are bringing about race degeneracy and social decadence. There is serious danger that the teachers of eugenics may take a false road, and, in so far as they can influence human selection, may work deterioration rather than amelioration.

In the first place, eugenics tends to emphasize unduly the intellectual qualities. Galton’s whole interest was centered on hereditary genius. The only kind of superiority generally recognized is intellectual superiority. The only organ that it is sought to improve is the brain. If the eugenists could carry out their plans the human head would be enormously enlarged at the expense of the rest of the body. This would soon make it impossible for men to be born, for obstetricians know that the head is now so unnaturally large that birth is a great hardship for woman.

In the second place, eugenists manifest more or less contempt for the affective faculties. The emotional side of man’s nature becomes for them mere sentimentality. Brains, intellect, genius, alone have worth. Like the breeders of cattle, they would “breed for points,” and the head is the only organ that they seek to develop. But Nature is far wiser, and seeks to develop all the faculties and to prevent all extremes. The normal becomes the ideal. A perfect race is one that is developed in all its qualities, physical, moral, and

¹ See *Pure Sociology*, p. 302.

intellectual. It is this that the biological imperative aims at, and if not interfered with by the doctrinaires of heredity, this will be the result.

THE WELL BORN

It is strange that in the science of the well born all emphasis is laid on the ill born. To read the eugenic literature one would infer that the majority of mankind are defectives. The United States Census shows that the number of mentally defective (insane and feeble-minded) is about 333 per 100,000, or one-third of 1 per cent. While of course allowance must be made for errors in the statistics, and while there are many weak-minded persons who fail to be classed among defectives, still, after all corrections are made, the number of defectives cannot exceed one-half of 1 per cent of the population, leaving 99.5 per cent for the normal classes.

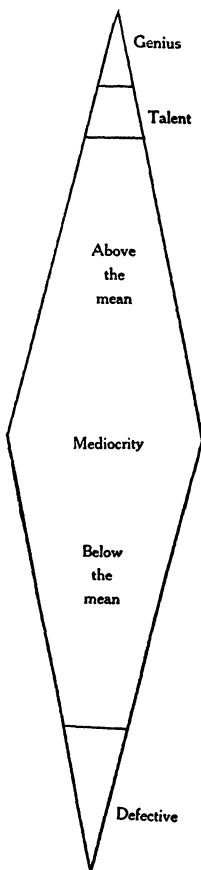


FIG. 1

Galton talked as though it were possible to arrange all the members of society in a series extending from idiocy to genius, and he supposed that the resultant figure would show a regular gradation, such as Quetelet found in measuring the stature of Belgian soldiers, by which he arrived at his well-known *homme moyen*, which some facetiously translate, the "mean man." With Galton the defectives on the one hand and the geniuses on the other represent mere "deviations from a mean." That "mean" is the great mass, or mediocrity. In his *Hereditary Genius* (p. 24) he gives a figure of Quetelet's results, indicating the deviations by lighter shading. He does not give any figure for mental deviations, but they might be represented by two triangles with a common base and with the apices opposite each other, as in Fig. 1.

This view is shared by Ribot and many others, and may be

regarded as the eugenic doctrine. Ammon¹ showed that it is not true for mental phenomena, and that the normal condition includes the bulk of the population. On p. 53 of the first edition, and p. 173 of the second, of his work on the *Social Order*, he gives a figure illustrating this, which, with the omission of some details, I have reproduced (Fig. 2).

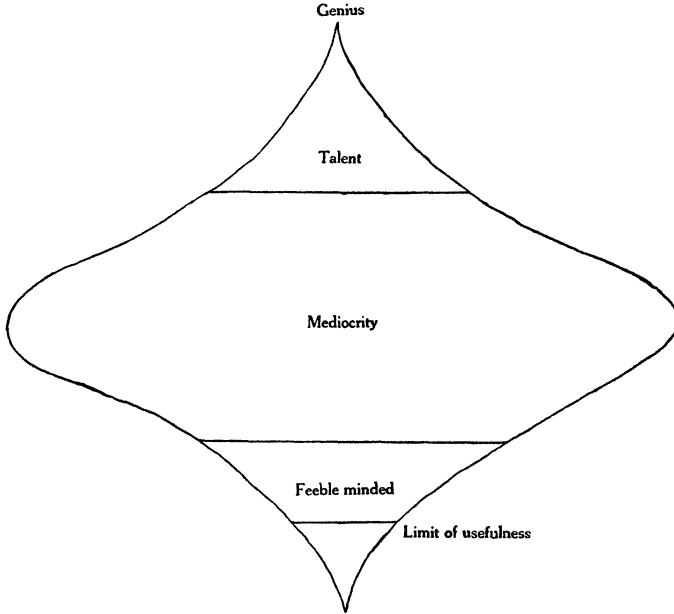


FIG. 2

This is much nearer to the real state of things, but still greatly exaggerates the mentally defective. The geniuses are probably also exaggerated, because the existing state of society does not enable the mental powers to show themselves.² There is scarcely any gradation from the insane and feeble-minded to the normal condition, and the transition should be represented as abrupt. Much, too, that is called genius is pathologic, and belongs rather at the bottom along with the insane. A figure like that on p. 744 (Fig. 3) would come much nearer the truth.

¹ Otto Ammon, *Die Gesellschaftsordnung und ihre natürlichen Grundlagen*, Jena, 1895; zweite verbesserte und vermehrte Auflage, 1896.

² See *Applied Sociology*, chap. ix.

But it is scarcely worth while to try to indicate the amount of genius. We really know nothing about it. All the estimates are based on the actual number who have accomplished something in the world, but this, as I have abundantly shown, is no criterion of the amount of real genius, because the greater part of it lies latent in the great mass, and has never had an opportunity to manifest itself. The amount of visible genius has never exceeded one-tenth of 1 per cent, but it is proved that at least two hundred times as

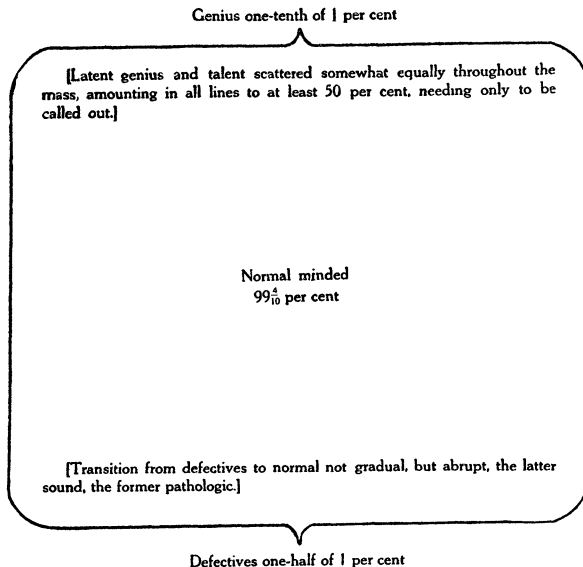


FIG. 3

much exists and might be brought out. This would raise it to 20 per cent. But when we recognize the many forms that genius takes we cannot escape the conclusion that some measure of genius exists in nearly everyone. All this genius is scattered somewhat uniformly through the whole mass of the population.

Negative eugenics aims at the elimination of the defective element. Positive eugenics seeks to increase the number of geniuses. This can be done only from the ranks of the normal, i.e., of mediocrity. These, and also the superior, and even the geniuses, are supposed to be capable of almost indefinite intellectual improve-

ment through hereditary selection. This is at least a recognition of the existence of potential genius.

THE LIFE-IMPULSE

The greatest problem before the world today is that of a universal upward tendency in nature. One aspect of it has been called "vitalism," or "neo-vitalism." But it is not less chemism and psychism. The biologists are alarmed at it. They see in it the specter of the old metaphysical life-entity. They are frightened at the bugbear of a life-god. But the discussions show that they fail to understand the principle. Properly conceived, it is entirely scientific, and has nothing to do with Reinke's "dominants" or Driesch's "entelechy" or "psychoid." Bergson talks of an *élan vital*, leaving it doubtful, however, as to what he really means. But the principle is not new. It has been dimly seen by many truly great philosophers. It has also been perceived by men of science. The eminent botanist Nägeli¹ clearly saw it in the plant world, and set it forth as the basis of his system. The great American botanist, Dr. Asa Gray, who was also a leading expounder of Darwin's entire system, accepted this view, and says that it was shared by another great European botanist, Alexander Braun. Criticizing the view that variation has no definite course, but takes place in all directions alike, he says: "What we observe in the seed-bed does not suggest this view. Nägeli, Braun, and myself incline to the opinion that each plant has an inherent tendency to variation in certain general directions."² The fact is that it is always in an upward direction, toward higher structural perfection.

What, then, is this principle? At bottom it is the universal energy at work in all nature. We have only to recognize that this universal energy is constructive and creative, as I have so fully shown.³ It builds, and to it are due all the manifold forms of existence—worlds, atoms, organisms, man, society. Evolution is

¹ Carl Nägeli, *Entstehung und Begriff der naturhistorischen Art*, zweite Auflage, München, 1865; *Mechanisch-physiologische Theorie der Abstammungslehre*, Leipzig, 1884.

² *Structural Botany*, New York and Chicago, 1879, p. 319.

³ *Pure Sociology*, pp. 79, 171.

a series, and it is also an ascending series. The "nisus of nature" is constantly pushing higher and higher structures into existence. The history of our earth is the history of a series of ascending steps in organic evolution. Each geologic age reveals the presence of higher types of both plants and animals than the preceding age. The present flora and fauna of the globe represent the last stage thus far attained in this ascending series. Toward the end of the animal line man emerged as the crown of the organic process. But man himself also constitutes an ascending series, and his history, unaided by the efforts of the eugenists, is one of progress from the lowest nature—men to the highest culture—races. This prolonged spontaneous upward movement of the entire organic world is the result of that form of the universal energy which inheres in the life-principle, and which makes life a progressive agent, mounting "through all the spires of form."

The present eugenic movement is one of distrust of nature, of lack of faith in great principles, of feverish haste to improve the world, of egotism in the assumption of a wisdom superior to that of nature. If it could have its way it would thwart and distort the spontaneous upward movement, and create an artificial race of hydrocephalous pigmies. Fortunately its power is limited, and can produce only a ripple on the surface of society.

EUTHENICS²

Is there, then, nothing to do? Are we to accept that modern scientific fatalism known as *laissez faire*, which enjoins the folding of the arms? Are we to preach a gospel of inaction? I for one certainly am not content to do so, and I believe that nothing I have thus far said is inconsistent with the most vigorous action, and that in the direction of the betterment of the human race. The end and aim of the eugenists cannot be reproached. The race is far

¹ *Dynamic Sociology*, II, 93, 178; *Pure Sociology*, pp. 22, 136.

² *Euthenics. The Science of Controllable Environment. A Plea for Better Living Conditions as a First Step Toward Higher Human Efficiency.* By Ellen H. Richards, Boston, 1910.

Mrs. Richards gives (p. vii) the etymology of the word and its classic uses. The central thought seems to be that of material prosperity. I shall use it as embracing practically all that Galton meant by "nurture."

from perfect. Its condition is deplorable. Its improvement is entirely feasible, and in the highest degree desirable. Nor do I refer merely to economic conditions, to the poverty and misery of the disinherited classes. The intellectual state of the world is deplorable, and its improvement is clearly within the reach of society itself. It is therefore a question of method rather than of principle that concerns us.

THE HUMAN BRAIN

The brain of primitive man was so large and so highly developed that he reasoned himself into all sorts of errors, which he has handed down to us, and which have constituted the most serious impediment to the progress of the world. Cephalization, natural selection, and especially sexual selection, co-operated during a long prehuman period to give to man a head and a brain much too large for his good, and which has been for the most part a biologically disadvantageous character. It is only coming to serve a useful purpose in the most advanced stages of civilization. Brain increase is therefore not at all the needed thing for the improvement of the race. The chief evils of the world have been due to error, which is a product of reason. Error is in turn the result of the ignorance of man of his environment, and his consequent false reasoning about it. The progress of the world has been due to scientific investigation, by which the true nature of the environment has been made known and the error removed. The thing needed for the improvement of the race is therefore more knowledge and not more brains.

COMPETITION

Everywhere in nature there is a tendency for the avenues of progress to become choked and the normally upward movement checked or arrested. The rising tide of world-progress, of which I have spoken, has therefore always been rhythmic. A dynamic state is converted into a static one, and kinetic activity into stagnation. The world has its resting stages, waiting for some new influence to enter in and produce a difference of potential. In the organic world competition tends constantly to keep the organism

far below its possibilities of development. In the struggle for existence every organism that survives is arrested on a comparatively low plane. The survival of the fittest is only the survival of low types adapted to a hostile environment. They are all striving to rise to higher stages under the spur of that inherent force, or life-urge, which is everywhere and always pushing upward toward higher and better things. Nature is literally "bound fast in fate" by the competitive forces everywhere at work. Every plant and every animal possesses potential qualities far higher than its environment will allow it to manifest.¹

The signal success of artificial selection is due entirely to this principle. The truth, however, is ignored by those who avail themselves of the principle. It is ignored by eugenists, who imagine they are adding something to the native powers of men, when all they can do at most is to loose the fetters with which nature has bound them. All that the agriculturist or the horticulturist can do, all that he needs to do, is to remove the hostile influences that restrain the native energies of the vegetable kingdom, and permit those energies to lift them to higher levels of existence. All that the stock-breeder can do is to liberate certain selected parts of the animal organism, and permit those parts to expand by their inherent powers. All that the eugenist could do, if he had full power to transform human beings in conformity with his capricious notions of what constitutes improvement, would be to set free the particular elements of human nature that he should select, and watch the workings of those potential agencies that had been hitherto cramped into quiescence.

But all this is *nurture*, pure and simple. Nature is unchanged. The hereditary tendencies remain the same. These are beyond the reach of human art. It is the environment that holds the hereditary impulse down. Man has no power over heredity. The only thing he can affect is the environment. It is true that man can utilize the laws of heredity. But the utilization of any law of nature consists simply in so adjusting the environment that the law shall operate in his interest. It is merely directing the forces

¹ I set forth this principle and established it by numerous examples as long ago as 1876. See my article on "The Local Distribution of Plants and the Theory of Adaptation" in the *Popular Science Monthly* for October, 1876, IX, 676-84.

of nature into channels of human advantage. But those channels belong to the environment.

SPONTANEOUS VARIATION

Darwin recognized the existence of spontaneous variation. In fact, he admitted that it must be called in to explain the first step in natural selection. Without it there would be nothing for natural selection to lay hold of. Enamored of the great principle of natural selection, biologists have fallen under the illusion that it explains everything. But spontaneous variation is a more fundamental principle. It is prior in order, and it is universal in nature. It goes on along with natural selection and in perfect harmony with it. It explains great numbers of facts that natural selection is powerless to explain. This latter can explain the biologically advantageous only, while those changes which are devoid of utility can be explained by spontaneous variation only. I long ago emphasized this fact and illustrated it by striking examples from my own special field.¹ I called it "fortuitous variation," but the phrase was due to the impression under which I then labored that Darwin himself had used it. But it is the same as his "spontaneous variation," simply emphasizing the fact, which so strongly appealed to me, that such variations take place, as it were, by chance, and not because they are useful. In point of fact, as I have repeatedly shown, they are due to that inherent impulse of the whole organic world, which is perpetually pressing in all directions, and striving to lift all life to higher levels, and which really brings about organic evolution.

THE ENVIRONMENT

It turns out, then, that after all the discussion of heredity, and the hopes hung upon the idea of utilizing it in the interest of race improvement, it is a fixed quantity which no human power can change, while the environment, which Galton affected to despise,

¹ See a brief abstract, all that was ever published, of my paper on "Fortuitous Variation in the Genus *Eupatorium*," in *Nature*, London, for July 25, 1889, XI, 310. On account of the importance of the idea, even for sociology, and the completely buried condition of this note, I reproduced the essential part of it in *Pure Sociology*. See pp. 241-42.

is not only easily modified, but is in reality the only thing that is modified in the process of artificial selection, which is the essential principle of eugenics itself. All the improvement that can be brought about through any of the applications of that art must be the result of nurture, and cannot be due to any change in nature, since nature is incapable of change.

There is a sense in which the environment may be regarded as representing opposition.¹ It is the environment in the widest sense that resists the upward pressure of the life-force, and holds all nature down. That force is like an elastic spring coiled up beneath a mass of environmental débris, and needing only to be freed in order to unfold spontaneously and lift the organic world to higher and ever-higher planes. In the human field the mind-force is added to the life-force, and both vital and psychic powers press forward together toward some exalted goal. The environment lies across the path of both and obstructs their rise. The problem everywhere is how to unlock these prison doors and set free the innate forces of nature.

THE ORGANIC ENVIRONMENT

Darwin has taught us that the chief barrier to the advance of any species of plants or animals is its competition with other plants and animals that contest the same ground. And therefore the fiercest opponents of any species are the members of the same species which demand the same elements of subsistence. Hence the chief form of relief in the organic world consists in the thinning-out of competitors. Any species of animals or plants left free to propagate at its normal rate would overrun the earth in a short time and leave no room for any other species. Any species that is sufficiently vigorous to resist its organic environment will crowd out all others and monopolize the earth. If nature permitted this there could be no variety, but only one monotonous aspect devoid of interest or beauty. Whatever we may think of the harsh method by which this is prevented, we cannot regret that it is prevented, and that we have a world of variety, interest, and aesthetic attractiveness.

¹ See *Applied Sociology*, pp. 123-28, 233-34.

THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

It is not generally realized that in this respect the social environment does not essentially differ from the organic environment. It is true that Malthus taught us this more than a century ago, but we go on deploring the action of this law in the human race, and striving to nullify it by all manner of artificial devices. That rational man has the power through his intelligence to rob this law of its harsh, painful features is beyond question, but whenever this is attempted there is a general outcry against it, and those who attempt it are accused of an unpardonable sin against nature, and usually of a sin against God.

RACE SUICIDE

On April 12, 1901, Dr. Edward A. Ross, in his annual address before the American Academy of Political and Social Science in Philadelphia, speaking of the displacement of the American by the foreign population in this country, uttered these words:

For a case like this I can find no words so apt as "race suicide."¹ There is no bloodshed, no violence, no assault of the race that waxes upon the race that wanes. The higher race quietly and unobtrusively eliminates itself rather than endure individually the bitter competition it has failed to ward off by collective action.²

The phrase "race suicide" was immediately taken up and echoed throughout the civilized world. "Race suicide" was loudly and widely condemned, and branded as a mark of decadence. Chief among those to make a public use of it and indulge in its wholesale condemnation was Theodore Roosevelt, who lost no opportunity to weave it into his speeches and warn his audiences against its insidious dangers to mankind. He was credited with the authorship of the phrase, and the press took it up and scattered it broadcast over the world. Books with it as their title have been written, and the literature of foreign countries is now replete with translations of it into all languages.

¹ The use of quotation marks here was probably not intended by Dr. Ross, as the words were not quoted, and were here used for the first time.

² *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Philadelphia, XVIII (July, 1901), 88.

THE FALLING BIRTH-RATE

All this is simply the latest aspect of the general alarm that has come into the world at the manifest decline in the birth-rate of civilized countries. Many see in it the approach of the end of the human race itself, and are filled with all manner of sinister forebodings. In France, where it is most extreme, and where a stationary condition of the population has almost been reached, thorough scientific inquiries into the causes have been instituted by the government, with the general result of establishing the fact that the limitation of families is in the main voluntary and purposeful. There are many elements that must be considered in the complete understanding of the problem, but the great truth stands clearly forth that people are no longer willing to contribute to the population at the rate prescribed by nature.

THE LAW OF POPULATION

Further investigations in all countries have shown that the movement is general, and although the problem is complicated by a large number of special influences, there comes forth from amid it all a great law, which may be called *the law of population*. It is very distinct from Malthus' "principle of population," and may be stated in this simple form: *population is inversely proportional to intelligence*.

What is the meaning of this law? It means that man, in proportion to his intelligence, is learning to mitigate the cruel law of the organic environment, which consists, as already stated, in reproducing greatly in excess of the possibility of existence, and then killing off the surplus. By whatever name we may call it, this law has in fact applied to mankind in all the ages past. It still applies to the uncivilized races, and it no less applies to the lower classes of civilized society. These still remain prolific. They furnish the *proles*, and constitute the proletariat. But nature knows how to keep down population, and they are still the victims of the organic law. And in so far as the population of civilized countries is permitted to increase, it must be from the proletariat. The enlightened classes refuse longer to furnish soldiers to gratify the ambition of military chieftains. They seek comfort and happiness, and have learned how to obtain them. They prefer quality

to quantity, and demand *multum non multa*. They are accomplishing the same end as nature, viz., numerical uniformity, but they are doing it without destruction and without pain. Their remedial agent is a prophylactic. They have solved the Malthusian problem by the discovery of restraints to population of which Malthus never dreamed.

EUDEMICS¹

There are many who look with alarm at the fact that population is being to so great an extent recruited from the base, i.e., from the lower classes. Such apprehensions are due to the almost universal error that those classes are inferior to the middle and higher classes. This is not the place to refute this error, and I have done it elsewhere,² but could it be removed, all grounds for alarm would be dispelled. If there are signs of decadence anywhere they are not in the proletariat. They are to be found among the pampered rich and not among the hampered poor. These, though ill bred, are well born; their infusion into the population imparts to it a healthy tone. It constitutes the hope of society.

On a former occasion³ I emphasized this fact in language which I could not now improve, and which, therefore, as a concluding word, I will ask permission to repeat:

The paper of this morning treats the problem to which Galton, Karl Pearson, Ribot, Lombroso, Ferri, and many others have devoted so much

¹ This word, so far as I am aware, has thus far appeared only three times in print, viz., first, in the paper of Professor J. Q. Dealey on "The Teaching of Sociology," read before the American Sociological Society, on December 31, 1909, and published in the *American Journal of Sociology* for March, 1910, XV, 662, and in the *Publications* of the society, IV, 182; second, in a review of Professor C. B. Davenport's *Eugenics*, by Mr. Carol Aronovici, in the *American Journal of Sociology* for July, 1910, XVI, 122; and, third, in Professor Dealey's recent work, *The Family in Its Sociological Aspect*, Boston, 1912, p. 128; each time in a footnote only, but also each time credited to Professor H. L. Koopman, Librarian of Brown University. Professor Koopman informs me that he suggested the word to Professor Dealey in conversation, and Professor Dealey admits this to be the origin of it. But the word seems to be needed, derived as it is from the Greek *δημος*, "the people at large," and signifying a science or doctrine of the welfare of the masses. It alliterates well with the other two words, "eugenics" and "euthenics," and yet it has a distinct meaning of its own, greatly expanding the whole field of discussion.

² See *Applied Sociology*, pp. 95-110, 129-81.

³ Remarks on a paper by Professor D. Collin Wells on "Social Darwinism," read before the American Sociological Society on December 29, 1906. See the *American Journal of Sociology* for March, 1907, XII, 709-10, and the *Publications* of the society, I, 131-32.

attention—namely, the physiological improvement of the race of men. One aspect of that problem was thoroughly discussed yesterday, and it is remarkable that neither the able paper of Professor Ross nor any of the discussions of that paper once alluded to the most important and best-established law of demography—that population is inversely proportional to intelligence. Of course there are other things of which the same general principle is true. Suicide, insanity, crime, and vice increase as we rise in the scale of intelligence. You do not find them among animals, and you find them less among savages and lower classes than in the upper strata of society. It is lowest in the scale of organic life that we find the highest fecundity, and the law goes back through the entire animal kingdom until we have those Protozoans in which one individual may be the parent of millions of offspring. This law also extends upward to the very topmost layers of society and finds its maximum expression in the very few who have attained to that lofty realm of wisdom where they not only understand the teachings of eugenics, but are capable of applying them to family life.

The doctrine defended by Professor Wells is the most complete example of the oligocentric world-view¹ which is coming to prevail in the higher classes of society, and would center the entire attention of the world upon an almost infinitesimal fraction of the human race and ignore all the rest. It is trying to polish up the gilded pinnacles of the social temple so as to make them shine a little more brightly, while entirely neglecting the great, coarse foundation-stones upon which it rests. The education and preservation of the select few, of the higher classes, of the emerged hundredth, to the neglect of the submerged tenth and the rest of the ninety-nine hundredths of society, covers too small a field. I cannot bring myself to work contentedly in a field so narrow, however fascinating in itself. Perhaps mine is a "vaulting ambition," but I want a field that shall be broad enough to embrace the whole human race.

For an indefinite period yet to come society will continue to be recruited from the base. The swarming and spawning millions of the lower ranks will continue in the future as in the past to swamp all the fruits of intelligence and compel society to assimilate this mass of crude material as best it can.

This is commonly looked upon as the deplorable consequence of the demographic law referred to, and it is said that society is doomed to hopeless degeneracy. Is it possible to take any other view? I think it is, and the only consolation, the only hope, lies in the truth that, so far as the native capacity, the potential quality, the "promise and potency" of a higher life are concerned, those swarming, spawning millions, the bottom layer of society, the proletariat, the working classes, the "hewers of wood and drawers of water," nay, even the denizens of the slums—that all these are by nature the peers of the boasted "aristocracy of brains" that now dominates society and looks down upon them, and the equals in all but privilege of the most enlightened teachers of eugenics.

¹ *Applied Sociology*, p. 23.